



For Immediate Release  
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## **State parks preservation package approved by Senate**

**LANSING** – Michigan’s state parks would receive more funding under three bills passed today by the Senate.

The State Parks Initiative package is sponsored by Sens. Jason Allen, R-Traverse City; Tony Stamas, R-Midland; and Patty Birkholz, R-Saugatuck Township.

Senate Bill 1279, sponsored by Allen, would implement an income tax return check-off for donations to the state park system. The bill would allow Michigan taxpayers to donate a contribution of \$2 or more through their tax return to the Michigan State Park Endowment Fund.

“This package is designed to help keep our state parks clean and protected,” Allen said. “These bills provide residents opportunities to donate financially and incentives to volunteer their time to help ensure that the state parks remain breathtakingly beautiful.”

SB 1281 would create an awards program recognizing a state park of the year, state park volunteer of the year and state park employee of the year.

SB 1280 would set in statute the formation of a State Parks Advisory Committee. The State Parks Advisory Committee would help guide the state park system by providing recommendations to the Legislature, governor and Natural Resources Commission on management, planning and improvements for the parks.

The advisory committee also would be in charge of selecting the award recipients each year. The 17-member committee would be appointed by the director of the Department of Natural Resources with the advice and consent of the Natural Resources Commission.

“The natural beauty of our state is undeniable,” Allen said. “Michigan’s state park system provides countless outdoor recreation opportunities for residents and tourists alike to enjoy the natural splendor of our state. Protecting our state parks is fundamental to maintaining our quality of life and economy.”

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